NOV 19 REC'D

FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

First Class

To:

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID 8¢
PERMIT 1083
BERKELEY, CAL.

Express Ads

YOUR AMTRAK TICKETS BY MAIL! A call is all it takes for complete planning, reservations and tickets. Call GREAT WESTERN TOURS at (415) 398-2994, or write us at the Sheraton Palace Hotel, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105. "An AMTRAK appointed agency dedicated to the pleasure of travel by train."

1884 ROCK ISLAND TIMETABLE & SYSTEM MAP. An authentic reproduction, 18" x 38" printed on top quality paper. Only $1 ea. plus 25¢ per order handling & postage. Make check or M.O. payable to "Rock Island Lines" and send to: Public Relations Dept., Rock Island Lines, 139 W. Van Buren St., Chicago, IL 60605.

TIMETABLE BARGAINS!! PUBLIC TIMETABLE GRAB BAGS. $9.00 worth of timetables only $4. $18.00 worth of timetables only $8, $27.00 worth of timetables only $12. My selection but I guarantee a nice variety of roads, dates and forms, all excellent condition, most items early 1960's. Special clear plastic covers for public timetables, beautiful, strong, over 100,000 sold so far, six cents each. Order any quantity any time. Sample free. Large public timetable list fifty cents. I buy timetable collections.
Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland, PA 18966.

RAILROAD UNIFORM BUTTONS 50¢ each postpaid. Santa Fe, Union Pacific, Western Pacific, Northern Pacific, Key System, Denver and Salt Lake, Salt Lake and Utah, Pere Marquette, Monon and Rock Island. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens Street, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

TRAINWATCHING QUESTION: Have you ever been frustrated by picking bad times for train watching? To help railfans, a new 24 page booklet has just been published containing charts and data on two class A railroads as a case example. Various charts consider activity during the day, time of week, percentages, and more for two months at a single location. "Case Data For Train Watchers" for only $1.25. David D. Groteau, Dept. TW111Z, P. O. Box 1016, Colton, California 92324.

SOUTHERN RAILFAN - Newsletter on Southeastern railroading - L&N, SR, SCL, ICG, C&O, B&O, N&W, and others. Plenty of Amtrak and other passenger news each issue. Sample issue - 32¢ in stamps to Walt Stringer, Box 1055, 1910 Caledonia, Knoxville, TN 37916.

At his retreat overlooking the tracks at San Clemente, under tremendous pressures, President Richard Nixon opted for passenger trains, signed the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970. A few days prior, he had affixed his signature to the Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1970. In 1973 his Secretary of Transportation pronounced Amtrak worthy of augmented support. And, with strong Administration support, the breakthrough Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 became law, financing rail alternatives in lieu of urban freeways under local option. Thank you and your aides, Mr. President, and the hard-working Congress in these cooperative and constructive achievements. S. 768, Hartke-Weicker, the Spirit of '76 High Speed Rail Act, awaits.--Robert J. Swan, transit leadership-public transit catalyst, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801.

RAIL TRAVEL newsletter

25¢

VOL. 3 NO. 21
FIRST ISSUE OF
NOVEMBER 1973
#71

IS AMTRAK A GOOD DEAL?
VIEWS OF CONGRESS & THE D.O.T.

COVER PHOTO: Amtrak playing cards photographed in the studios of Message Media.

LETTERS

Author Lee ("Out East on the Overland Train," last issue) would do well to remember that this is 1973 and not 1965. Menus for Amtrak trains are ordained from Washington, D.C., not San Francisco.

A blown high amperage fuse was responsible for most of the delay into Ogden experienced by his train. Meets between passenger trains in CTC territory consume a negligible amount of time. As for freight trains having priority--it makes a lot more sense to put a relatively short passenger train into a siding than a long, heavy freight--especially when total elapsed time is considered.

I will close by stating that station forces at Ogden are Amtrak employees.

John C. Plytnick

San Francisco, California

Being an avid cyclist as well as a rail enthusiast, I currently subscribe to Bicycling Magazine, and found articles on carrying bikes via train in the July and October issues. Althe cyclists and railroad advocates are considered as separate interest groups, they are very closely related in their concerns and goals. Bicycles and trains go well together, and used together, can be the most efficient, practical and environmentally sound means of transporting people in our transportation and energy crisis. Both interest groups have one common enemy: motorized highway transport (highways, excluding limited access, are good for cyclists). Perhaps the two ought to be more aware of each other, and act jointly in areas of common concern.

Dave Dure

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Effective January 1, 1974 the subscription rate of Rail Travel Newsletter will be increased from six dollars to seven dollars yearly. The single issue price will be thirty cents instead of twenty-five cents. We regret having to make this increase, which is necessitated by a 25% rise in the first class postage rate in January, as well as by inflationary costs of production. In the past we polled readers and experimented with cheaper and slower classes of mail delivery, and the overwhelming response was that we should retain first class delivery, since the speed with which we get the news to readers was deemed one of the best-liked features of RTN. Should any North American reader desire air mail delivery of RTN, we can arrange it if the equivalent of 3¢ per issue is added to the regular subscription price. We will quote overseas subscription rates upon request.

You can determine the expiration time of your subscription from the code numbers on your address label. The highest coded number is the whole number of your last issue. Example: 25-48 R72 indicates that your first subscription ran from number 25 thru number 48, and was then renewed up to and including number 72. The whole number of each issue is given at the bottom of this page. This is issue number 71.

To the many subscribers who joined us thru our recent ads in Passenger Train Journal: the bill for the remainder of your subscription was on a blue insert placed in your first trial issue. Apparently we didn't make clear enough that the form was a bill, and some people were understandably confused.

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 3, No. 21 (Whole No. 71), First Issue of November, 1973.
Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709.
Subscription $6.00 per year; single copy 25¢. STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Doug Ellis, Staff Photographer.
Scheduled mailing date for this issue: November 16, 1973.

PRESIDENT SIGNS AMTRAK IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1973

To the surprise and delight of rail supporters, President Nixon signed into law on Nov. 3, the last day to do so, the bill for Amtrak's Fiscal 1974 appropriation described earlier in RTN. Nixon signed the bill despite the fact that the Secretary of Transportation and the Office of Management and Budget had recommended he veto it because it reduces DOT's control over Amtrak. But President Nixon, working on his emergency energy proposals, signed it and named the energy crisis as a major reason (see QUOTES, p. 15). The Wall Street Journal had declared the signing unlikely, had editorialized against the bill, and speculated afterwards that "public support for Amtrak apparently helped bar a veto of its expansion plans." The Administration indicated it objected to the lessening of DOT power over Amtrak and would consider other plans to restore such power.

NORTHEAST RAIL BILL MOVING THROUGH CONGRESS

The bill to establish a Northeast Rail Corporation to resolve the problems of bankrupt Northeastern railroads is now moving steadily toward passage. The Amtrak-like corporation it would set up would run a scaled-down system made up of pieces of the six bankrupt railroads, providing a network of about 19,000 miles (compared with 25,000 now existing). The bill also establishes a nonprofit Federal National Railway Association (Fannie Rae) to plan and finance the system. The new plan would cost about $1.4 billion and would provide worker compensation for employees laid off by the move. The NERC would be a for-profit corporation that actually operates the railroads, and would compete with two existing profitable roads, the Chessie System and Norfolk & Western.

AMTRAK TO DISCOURAGE SHORT TRIPS

As outlined here last issue, Amtrak fare increases of about 10% went into effect Nov. 16 on some routes. Amtrak sources said one reason for the increases was to discourage some short trips so more seats are available for long-haul riders. The corporation said that it has to turn away many requests for N.Y.-Washington Metroliner tickets because seats may be filled between, say, New York and Trenton. The fare increase also is to cover rising costs, including $15 million wage and price increases during the last fiscal year. Besides the changes printed here last issue, Amtrak, who did not issue a press release on the changes, will cancel the ladies' excursion fare for one-day Northeast Corridor round trips.

VIOLENT TRANSPORTATION DEATHS

The night of November 3 saw two shocking transportation incidents. In California's worst bus crash, a Greyhound chartered bus bound for Reno from Richmond, CA crashed at high speed into a bridge pillar on a freeway near Sacramento, killing 13 riders including the driver and injuring many of the other passengers in what was described as a gorey mess. Some witnesses said the bus was exceeding the speed limit, but Greyhound spokesmen claimed the buses have governors that limit their top speed. In a gruesome airline incident over southwestern New Mexico, an engine on a National Airlines DC-10 disintegrated, hurling pieces into the cabin and depressurizing it. A Beaumont, Texas man was sucked from his seat and out the plane window. His body was not found. Other passengers were injured when the plane made an emergency landing at Albuquerque. The plane carried 116 and a crew of 12.
A California Assemblyman is proposing mandatory seat belts on common carrier buses as an outgrowth of the Greyhound wreck.

AMTRAK COMPUTERIZES PASSENGER RESERVATION SYSTEM

Amtrak has completed computerization of its reservation system for the whole Northeast Corridor between Canada and Virginia. The system is predicted to be operating nationwide by February. By the end of 1974 the system is to be connected with schedules of all other types of public carriers as well.

IS AMTRAK A GOOD DEAL?
VIEWS OF CONGRESS & THE D.O.T.

Rail travelers who are concerned about citizens having adequate say in how their nationwide rail passenger system is run have cause for rejoicing at the enactment of the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973 into law this past Nov. 3. Not only does the new legislation give Amtrak a financial shot in the arm, but perhaps more importantly for the long run it takes some of the power to oversee Amtrak away from the Administration and gives it to Congress--and the people who elect the Congress. More positions for consumer representatives are established on Amtrak's Board of Directors. The ICC--for better or worse--is given more authority to oversee Amtrak's operations.

In the Congressional debate that worked out the present law, the interested reader can find--in the Congressional Record in mid-October--informative indications of the tension existing between Congress and the Administration (the Dept. of Transportation) over the directions Amtrak should be taking. Since its inception, Amtrak has been pushed by Congress farther than the Administration would permit. The White House even impounded millions of dollars voted by Congress that would have been running needed new trains now had they not been withheld. The new bill restores them and prohibits further impounding of funds for the Corporation. The Administration has been fearful that Amtrak would become a permanent burden to the taxpayer, and its policy from the start has been to put the brakes on Amtrak's progress.

In the House report (Oct. 17) on the bill out of the conference committee, Congressmen took occasion to criticize the DOT, and in particular Under Secretary John W. Barnum. Michigan Congressman Dingell told his fellow Congressmen: "Amtrak was an attempt to set up a private profitable rail passenger corporation which would be viable in character. I am sorry to report that it appears to be, at least in the mind of one individual, namely, Mr. John Barnum, ... an attempt to nationalize Amtrak, because I note ... that Mr. Barnum has been participating in board of directors meetings at Amtrak, where he serves in that capacity as representative of the Secretary, not as an ordinary member of the board of directors, but as one who later chooses to withhold funds and to influence the decision-making process thru the mechanisms of the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of the Budget. This is at wide variance with the intention of the committee and at wide variance with the intention of the Congress... It is our intention that Amtrak should function as much as possible as a private corporation and not be dictated to by DOT or by the Bureau of the Budget."

Congressman Dingell read into the record the minutes of the Sept. 27 meeting of Amtrak's board of directors, in which Barnum voted "no" on the motion to approve the purchase of 57 Metroliner-type cars, 11 electric and 70 diesel locomotives. The indication was that the "no" vote was tantamount to a DOT veto of the plan for new Amtrak equipment. This vote, said Dingell, "does him (Barnum) small credit" and "reflects a very clear intent and attempt on his part to unduly intrude into and interfere in the affairs of Amtrak in defiance of the earlier intent of Congress..."

Further documents read into the record clearly indicate the pressures placed upon Amtrak to knuckle under to the Administration. Some of the demands the DOT made as a requirement for approving Amtrak's budget seem impossible. In mid-September the DOT wrote Roger Lewis asking for a fiscal year 1975 budget which required projected profit and loss figures by route for fiscal year 1977 on a cents per passenger mile basis. In making this astounding request, the DOT required Amtrak to use projected data on ridership increases, fare changes, management cost reductions, and labor contract increases, among others. Anyone who has regularly followed the progress of Amtrak since 1971 would immediately realize that attempting to make such estimates as far ahead as 1977 would be ludicrous, and that such a demand would seem to constitute a sheer harassment of the corporation.

Not only did the DOT require projected 1977 figures--figures that would certainly be meaningless given the known fluidity of the transportation picture and Amtrak's Congressional mandate to experiment with new service--, but it wanted Amtrak to spend precious hours constructing graphs and tables to show "the total cost per passenger mile for the years 1972-1976 under the following route structures: (1) Route structure as of May 1, 1973, (2) Route structure of October 1, 1973, (3) Route structure proposed for July 1, 1974, (4) Route structure which includes only those routes which would be profitable in 1977." What's more DOT demanded that Amtrak "Show the impact of any proposed changes in the route structure for 1975 by contrasting the proposed system with the 10/1/73 system in the following categories (totals): States served, SMSA's served, population served, estimated passengers in 1976, estimated 1975 and 1976 deficits" and that they "Submit a source and application of funds table for the years 1972-1975."

It is to Amtrak's credit that the corporation refused to comply with these demands. Barnum complained to Roger Lewis on Sept. 25, the same day Lewis was hospitalized with heart trouble, that he had not received the data demanded. It appeared that a confrontation between Amtrak and the DOT was happening. Barnum told Lewis that "On the issue of new service routes--Little Rock and San Joaquin--we are all aware of the statements and actions of the congressional committees in favor of such service. However, management should present to the Board data on alternate routes, cost/revenue projections, and equipment and facility requirements." Apparently another example of the balance-of-powers fight in Washington, with the Executive branch regarding laws made by the Legislative branch as mere "statements and actions." Barnum appended a list of questions about new routes and the use of new equipment, including whether less expensive foreign-built equipment had been considered, what alternate routes were available, and whether the services would be experimental.

Now the DOT began applying the heat. Another DOT personage sent Lewis a copy of an earlier dictum from Roy Ash, head of the Office of Management and Budget, stating in so many words that Amtrak must not go beyond the bounds of the $93 million appropriation set by OMB, DOT and Amtrak in consultation.

Amtrak's J. Richard Tomlinson had already drawn up a 5-year plan, tho much less detailed than DOT wanted. Tomlinson estimated that "There will be a car shortage in the summer of 1974 and to a lesser degree in the summer of 1975." He said Amtrak would attempt to cover with short-term leases, but that available equipment is quite limited.

On October 15, just two days before members of Congress read the material into the Congressional Record, John W. Ingram, head of the DOT's Federal Railroad Administration, wrote to Tomlinson (who by this time had taken over for Roger Lewis during Lewis's convalescence) on the occasion of Amtrak's requesting release of more funds. Ingram has previously been described in RTN as the most vocal critic of passenger trains in the nation. He refused to release any more money to Amtrak until Barnum's demands had been met. He expressed "intense dissatisfaction and disappointment at the refusal of Amtrak to furnish the Department and my administration with meaningful data concerning Amtrak's programs."

After bringing to the attention of Congress these examples of what was regarded as uncalled-for meddling by the Administration in the affairs of Amtrak, the House voted 346-51 to approve the bill which strengthens the ties of Amtrak to Congress and to the consumer, and requires that Amtrak submit to Congress at the same time it submits to the Administration any legislative recommendations, testimony or comments. It specifically prohibits any officer or agency of the U.S. from requiring Amtrak to submit such matters to them before submittal to Congress. The effect will be that consumers will find information about Amtrak's plans more readily available, and should be able to influence the course of Amtrak's progress much more clearly than before.

END OF AN ERA

In our first issue of May appeared a news summary entitled "Energy is the name of the game." We didn't mean that to be prophetic, but it's happened that the growing fuel shortage has come to be almost the dominant issue of concern in the nation today, as well as in some overseas nations. We commented then that "It looks as if the time of the passenger train and of better urban mass transit is coming along faster than we realize." What we didn't know then was that the energy crisis was apparently to become the final dominant factor that would move people out of their automobiles and either onto public vehicles or into other activities.

We are at the beginning of the end of a long era of wasteful expansionism in terms of lavish use of energy. The immediate reason, of course, is the suddenly dwindling supply of petroleum from Mideast suppliers. Since we are an outgoing, highly extraverted and thus somewhat paranoid nation, we probably needed the stimulus of such an external event to make us turn around our priorities with regard to energy usage. Scientists have been making projections for years and decrying our rapid consumption of petroleum resources. But it seems to take a crisis, whether real or hoked up, to mobilize public opinion in a new direction. Now we have a reason to control our wasteful practices, and we have a suitable scapegoat--the Mideast nations--to blame our problem upon.

The formal occasion that can be considered as the beginning of the era of energy conservation was President Nixon's televised address of Nov. 7 in which he called for rapid congressional action to produce emergency measures to deal with the fuel shortage in the coming months. He named a reduction of over 10% in airline flights and a realigning of schedules of public carriers for greater economy. He ordered all government highway vehicles to be limited to 50mph top speed. He asked the nation to use mass transit and car pools, the states to enact 50mph speed limits on highways. He asked Congress to legislate a return to Daylight Saving Time on a year-round basis (this bill has now passed Senate and House conference committees, and the hour gain of clocks should take effect around Christmas, to last until at least the end of October, 1975). Altho the President asked for a relaxation of environmental pollution regulations temporarily to save energy, reports are that Congress is not going along completely with this facet of the energy conservation package.

For long range alleviation of the energy problem, Nixon asked for approval of construction of the Alaska pipeline (this bill has just been passed), for increased surface mining of coal, for natural gas exploration, for renewed offshore oil exploration, and for research in new sources of energy such as nuclear and solar. Nixon also asked Congress to establish a separate Energy Research and Development Administration. He also mentioned contingency plans for gasoline rationing.

The gas rationing aspect received perhaps widest play in newspapers, since it hits many people most directly. Latest word is that gasoline rationing, rather than gas allocation to dealers, could take effect in January, and the government is undecided on the mechanics of the process.

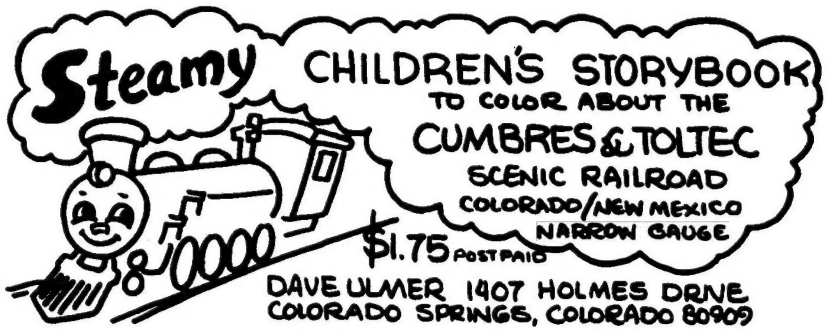
Effective December 1 the freeway speed in California will be cut from 70 to 65 mph, and New York and California are both working on upcoming 50mph limits. With such limits in effect, even the FLORIDIAN may look like a fast vehicle. There has apparently been no mention in the media about the effects upon Greyhound and other bus schedules of a general slowdown on the nation's highways.

What is the practical effect upon potential travelers of these predictions? From a very small and unscientific sample, we report on one family, who may be considered rather typical, who prefer driving to public transportation. Planning a Christmas trip from the San Francisco area to Los Angeles in their new foreign car, they state that they will simply ignore gasoline problems until they are confronted with them. In that case, they will go by train. What they do not know is that the train will be sold out long before then. They will probably cancel their trip.

Some public transit systems are now worrying about their current allocation of fuel, which is inadequate. It seems certainly likely that such systems will have high priority when scarce fuel is divided up. For private motorists, pleasure driving will apparently be the first to disappear. If gas rationing occurs, and at present it seems very likely (the alternative is to impose a stiff tax on gas to decrease sales), the amount allowed for an average car would probably be in the range of 10-15 gallons per week, officials said. Gasoline prices are moving upwards again, with Phillips the first to announce an increase. That gas is now selling at 49.9¢ per gallon for premium in our area. At Standard stations, the comparable price is still 45.5¢.

It looks as if we're nearly back to the World War II days of rationing, shortages and year-around Daylight Saving Time. The one thing lacking to make these things easier is a great motivating cause for which people can suffer.

AMTRAK'S RENAMING OF the lounge #3228 "Colonial Beach" to "William A. Griffin Jr." was done to honor the former director of passenger operations for the RF&P, whose untimely death occurred recently..... THE TURBO EQUIPMENT from Canada was busy touring New York State the past few weeks--New York to Buffalo--as part of an effort to drum up support for New York's big transportation bond issue. Presumably the equipment is now available for use on the New York-Boston run. At the moment three sets of equipment are available to protect one round trip a day..... THE GEORGE WASHINGTON & JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY have been rerouted via Logansport, Indiana, on the same route as the FLORIDIAN from Chicago to Indianapolis. F.R.A. safety rules recently imposed have precluded routing them on the assigned route via La Fayette. Timekeeping did not improve on the new route, however. On Nov. 1 Amtrak experimented with a new route, this time via C&O from Chicago via Peru, Marion, Munci, and Richmond to Cincinnati. No. 50 arrived in Cincinnati only 15 minutes late ("on time" in airline terms)..... WHICH BRINGS UP the fact that Amtrak would like to change its on-time performance standard to 15 instead of 5 minutes to conform with the airlines, and incidentally to improve its record a bit... FLYING SAUCERS ARE in the news again, and frankly it's a welcome relief from the other news. If the mode of propulsion of UFOs is gravitational, as Prof. Harder of the Univ. of Calif. thinks, we should be investigating them as a means of resolving our fuel crisis..... NORTH COAST HIAWATHA service via the old GN Wenatchee-Cascade Tunnel route between Seattle and Spokane will be continued indefinitely. It was originally announced for a one-year experimental period.....



REPRIEVE FOR THE 759

by Ken Maylath

The ex-Nickel Plate 759. A machine which graced the rails of one of the last major railroads to favor steam power. A machine which whipped long freight drags across the flatlands of Ohio and Indiana well into the 50's. A machine retired to the collection at Steamtown, at Bellow's Falls, Vermont, a couple years ago after many a memorable fantrip in the eastern U.S. But now on the 27th and 28th of October she was fired up again for one more trip, a journey over the rails of the Boston & Maine and Central Vermont from Boston to Montpelier, Vermont and return. Certainly an autumn weekend to remember.

My journey to the 759 began on a cool Friday evening as I boarded Amtrak's NIGHT OWL for the overnight hop to Boston. Number 66 slipped into Baltimore about 15 minutes late from Washington--perhaps due to a delayed connection from the Southern's PIEDMONT. Altho the connection at Boston to the 759 was but 35 minutes, no cause for alarm at this point, since the OWL's schedule is a leisurely proposition.

The usual consist of sleeper, sleeper lounge and several coaches. As usual, the sleeper was one of those ex-B&O 14-roomette, 4-bedroom propositions used by the SCL as slumbercoaches before coming to Amtrak. Altho refurbished, it carried the original name, "Wren." The bedroom lounge was interesting, in that it contained swivel type chairs in place of the traditional heavy armchairs. The conductor was a night person himself, apparently, since he was a veteran of years on the old FEDERAL before its demise and later revival in the form of the OWL. Talkative and quite pleasant, too. An extra complement to the lounge attendant. Altho it was past the midnight closing hour when my traveling companion and I went for a soft drink, we were served anyway. And in the morning, our porter picked up complimentary coffee (no, it was not requested) during our long stop at Providence. Certainly no complaints about the crew on this run nor about the equipment, tho we didn't check all the coaches.

Actually, we were only 5 minutes late by the time of departure from North Philadelphia, shortly after 1am. Come morning, we were traversing the suburbs of Providence when I lifted the shade to a bright, sunny autumn day. Arrival at Providence came 15 minutes before scheduled departure at 7:25. We left a couple minutes late but still rolled into South Station 6 minutes to the good.

My rendezvous with 759 came 20 minutes before the scheduled departure from North Station. As my friend picked up a rented auto which figured in our plans, I selected a seat at the open window of an ex-Reading commuter coach. Indeed, most of the 10 or so cars on the train were of similar origin. 759, in her original Nickel Plate lettering, looked good as always.

We began moving just a few minutes after 9, but paused for a few minutes in the yards to add a coal car on the rear. All the while, those B&M RDC cars moved in and out frequently, even tho it was a Saturday.

Once moving, we rolled thru the suburbs of Boston and into the country, picking up to at least 50. No strain on the 759 with a medium length passenger train. On thru Lowell, end of the B&M commuter zone and on to the single track CTC-controlled line to Nashua, Manchester and Concord. We paused briefly near Nashua to check a part of the locomotive, then continued to make good progress. A minute's stop in Concord, then the non-CTC trackage toward the community of Franklin. It seemed obvious that the amount of traffic and the level of track maintenance went down beyond Concord as we rolled on toward our rendezvous with the Central Vermont at White River Junction. There was one more stop, tho--the better part of an hour to take water at the tiny community of Andover. Arrival at White River came in mid-afternoon--quite the opposite part of the day from when the MONTREALER and WASHINGTONIAN pause at the interesting station building with its well known weathervane. This was also the point at which my companion and I switched places--he taking to the rails and I to the rented car.

So, it was drive and photograph as the train moved up the nicely maintained CV roadbed. Lengthening shadows, then a chilly fall evening by the time of arrival at Montpelier Junction. This was not quite the end of the journey, however. The last mile or so to downtown Montpelier was accomplished with the help of two diesels belonging to the little Montpelier and Barre Railroad. For one thing, there was a frail looking iron bridge along that last mile that might have taken issue with the 759.

Morning brought another sunny day, with a thick coating of frost in that northern location. The M&B diesels would push the train back to the Junction for its reunion with the 759. My companion and I were not planning to ride or chase the train all the way to Boston, only for the morning period. As things developed, it was just as well.

A decision had been made to coal the engine at Northfield, about 10 miles south of Montpelier, rather than do it during the overnight period. The conveyer belt arranged for the coaling operation decided to break down. Result? A hand coaling job--no small feat for a coal-hungry machine like the 759. The Northfield stop, then, stretched out for more than two hours. It was almost noon when the train finally steamed out.

It was time for us to hit the interstate highways south for New Haven as we speculated about the possibility of a rather late arrival in Boston. An unfortunate hitch in what was generally a most enjoyable trip.

Our drive to New Haven was accomplished with no greater problem than locating the dropoff location for the rented car, a few blocks from the campus of Yale University. A fast call for a taxi and we pulled up at the railroad station about 10 minutes before the 5:40pm departure of the Sunday-only New Haven-Washington Metroliner.

Altho there are a couple high level platforms there, Amtrak apparently isn't using them--just the MTA commuter trains. It was a bit inconvenient too, since the equipment was pulled up a car length beyond the end of the stairway from the waiting room, and since but one door was open to the train. In any event, we did leave on time. As we made the Bridgeport, Stamford and Rye stops on the way to New York, it was apparent that the crews on the former New Haven aren't as familiar with Metro operations as those on the south side of the big city. While goodly Sunday evening crowds boarded at each stop, those stops tended to be a little longer than would be the case in Philadelphia or Baltimore. Thus, we lost a couple minutes from our schedule and pulled into Penn Station 5 minutes behind. No real problem, because of the 20-minute allotment there.

An on-time departure from New York, train now well filled, for our nonstop hop to Philadelphia. This went quite well, the 90 miles clicked off in only 65 minutes. No problem getting out of there on time at 8:39. The rest of the journey was marked only by a brief slowdown near the Susquehanna River bridge in Maryland, bringing us into Baltimore about 3 minutes late and bringing the end of a true "on the go" weekend.

HOW TO ADVERTISE IN RTN: EXPRESS ADS (80 typewriter characters and spaces per line) cost just 25¢ per line (minimum $1). DISPLAY ADS are $10 for a full page (5x8 inches) with sizes and rates down to ⅛ page proportional (these prices for camera-ready copy). Send remittance with orders under $10 to: Message Media, Dept. RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

THROUGH THE ROCKIES-NOT AROUND THEM

by Glenn Lee

"'Tis A Privilege To Live in Colorado" proclaims the Denver Post in each daily edition. If you were among those fortunate enough to ride the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR from Denver this October thru the fall colors under crystal blue skies, you'd have to agree that the Post is not in error.

My trip on the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR was the last lap in a 3-stage trip to Glenwood Springs, Colorado, to "take the waters" in the famous Yampah Hot Springs, and to generally recuperate following a recent illness.

My appetite for the RGZ ride had been whetted the evening before when a friend drove me to Rio Grande lineside in suburban Arvada (near the point where the ambulances had been assembled in the ABC-TV Suspense movie "Runaway") to watch the ZEPHYR come home to Denver Sunday night. With some 323 passengers aboard, most returning from a fall foliage tour to Glenwood, the RGZ dropped thru Arvada with 9 cars, including 5 domes! The old CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR in the flesh! A true sight for sore eyes.

The sun was only coming up when I arrived at Denver Union on a Monday morning. The Great Hall, tho a little empty these days, perhaps runs that of Toronto Union a close second for sheer impressiveness. Outside, the old Burlington "Train of the Gods," built in 1937 as one of the TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR units, was parked coupled to SCL 501, an early-model E unit. Two of the cars had been removed in the early 1960s when the unit was in service as the NEBRASKA ZEPHYR, but "Apollo," "Neptune," "Mars," "Vulcan," and "Jupiter" (the observation), greeted the dawn with me. (This consist was also seen in one of the "Runaway" scenes.)

On a weekday morning, the RGZ is a smart 4-car train, including a baggage-coach combine, dome coach "Silver Colt," diner "Silver Banquet," and sleeper-dome-observation lounge "Silver Sky." As I climbed aboard, workmen were tinkering with the lead F unit, No. 5771. Something was wrong with the sanders, another indication that the Rio Grande F's are nearing retirement.

As we rolled out one minute late, I went to the diner, and refreshed with a hearty breakfast while we turned west and rolled up the Leyden Mesa, pointed directly at the Front Range of the Rockies. Only six of the 12 tables were working, but a friendly atmosphere prevailed. Across from me was Forest Crossen, author of "Switzerland Trail of America," a popular book on Colorado narrow gauge railroading. He was en route to Glenwood to check on book sales, and he lamented the fact that America does not now seem to produce the kind of great, inspired men who built railroads like the Rio Grande.

As breakfast concluded, we reached the "Big Ten," the great sweeping "S" curve between Rocky and Clay sidings, so called because it consists of two great 10-degree curves, and is one of America's great railroad engineering feats, ranking with Pennsy's Horseshoe Curve and SP's Tehachapi Loop. Railroading here is tough. In December, 1968, I had passed over this route on the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR following a bad freight wreck. A westbound freight had stalled above the Big Ten, and when the train was cut to allow doubling the hill, the rear half of the manifest wasn't tied down properly, and began rolling back to Denver. It jumped the tracks doing nearly 100mph on the upper half of the Big Ten, causing about $1 million damage--or nearly the amount of the year's passenger deficit. Many new autos caught fire when their gas tanks were crushed.

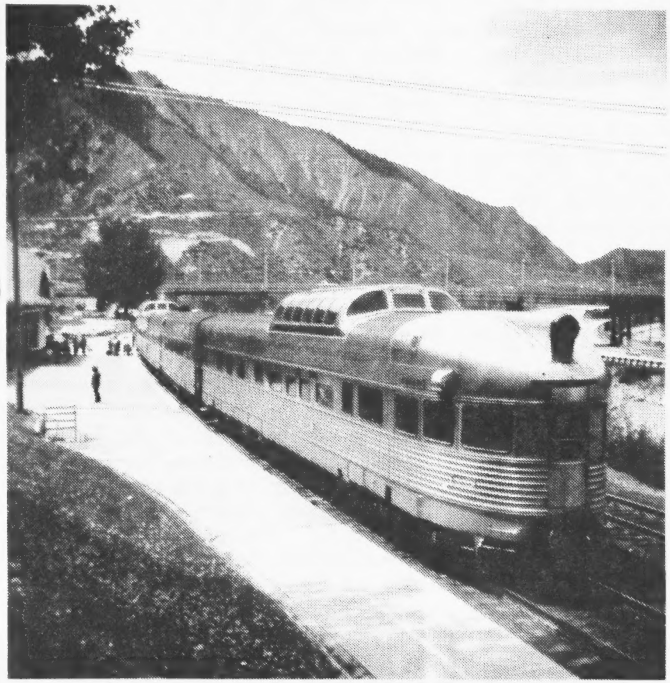
But today's big problem at the Big Ten is wind. Last winter a freight was derailed here by wind. Winds as high as 130mph are not uncommon at this point. Empty freight cars with an open door facing the mountains, and a closed door facing Denver are usually the ones to derail when filled with the intense blasts descending the Front Range eastbound. Rio Grande has finally placed 25 hopper cars on the mountain side of the windiest point, filled them with gravel, and tied them down on a separate track not connected with the main line. Our RGZ trainman said he had frequently been forced to crawl the length of stalled freights at this point, unable to stand because of the winds. He said the railroad finally installed a wind gauge at the Big Ten, and it once registered 152 mph! Passenger trains, he said, really get buffeted in this area too, but the only thing the wind seems to do to the varnish is slow it from 25 to about 17-18mph.

Once ascending the main slope of the Front Range, the scenery gets better with each and every curve. Soon the great plains stretch eastward to infinity. The great serrated masses of the Front Range look increasingly unreal. Did Cecil B. DeMille build them for an epic film?

Finally, the RGZ turns up the south fork of Boulder Creek, and heads west up high on the mountainside, but soon is right at creek level, rolling slowly thru a tight box canyon. Suddenly, with passengers almost dazed and reeling from the incredible view, RGZ makes an unscheduled stop near Tolland, almost 90 minutes out. Twelve Rio Grande employees and wives come aboard, joining the 49 who boarded at Denver.

This group takes up a portion of the rear dome in "Silver Sky," and it is a pleasure to listen to them discuss The Railroad, apparently their one and abiding subject of conversation.

The mountains grow taller and more awesome as we proceed west. We are in the Hall of the Mountain King. The RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR appears totally dominated as it passes the Giant's Ladder,



The graceful lines of the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR, with its rear observation "Silver Sky" are brought out in this photo by Paul Rayton. The train was pausing at the Glenwood Springs station.

the great switchbacks north of the main line which once carried the Denver and Salt Lake up to the 11,600-ft level of Rollins Pass before the Moffat Tunnel was built--thrown over the Rockies by the towering will of David Moffat, that most incredible of mortals. If and when the Great American Novel, or the American Epic Poem is finally written, it will have to be about David Moffat; and the Greek Tragedy which his railroad provided. David Moffat, embodying that most noble in the American West, turned upon and ignored by his cheap, shoddy, junky "friends" in his hour of need....

Suddenly, James Peak looms directly ahead of the RGZ, and "BOOM," we plunge into the tiny-looking anthole that is the 6.2-mile Moffat Tunnel. The sudden darkness is an almost welcome interlude after the multiple overdose of scenery. A moment to think; and to meet people.

There are some interesting Americans aboard. A couple from Charlotte, N.C. en route to Grand Junction. There they will rent a car to drive over the right-of-way of the old Rio Grande Southern to Dallas Divide, Lizard Head, and Rico. A couple who used to enjoy the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR returning to Sacramento via the Ogden limousine transfer. They miss the Zephyrette who made train announcements and explained the scenery. A young rail buff from Chicago en route to Thompson. He'll leave the RGZ there to hitchhike thru the Canyonlands and Grand Canyon National Park en route to southern Arizona for a Church of God convention.

The darkness of the tunnel gives one a chance to look at the cars. "Silver Sky's" rear lounge has been tastefully redone in desert colors, but the "Sky," as well as other cars, still have retained most of their CZ "look." A few minus points: the front dome windows had not been washed during the night in Denver, even tho it did not get down to freezing. Some of the dome and regular car windows had admitted moisture, and needed to be cleaned and resealed. The combine, once used on PROSPECTOR and ROYAL GORGE runs, has lost all its yellow paint, and now as a "silver" car blends very well with the rest of the train.

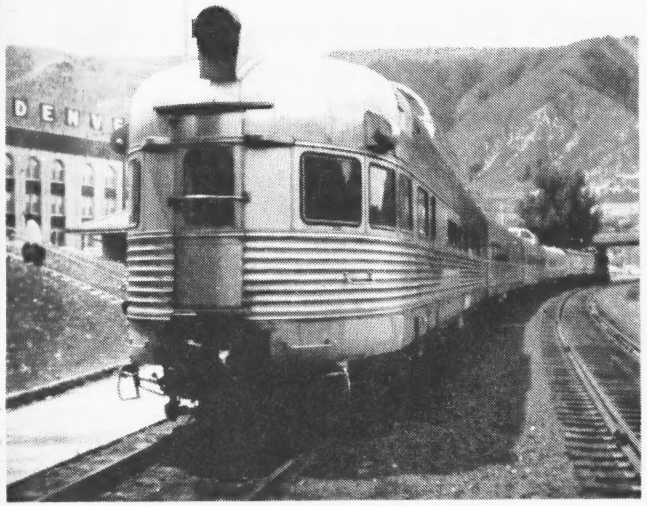
There are now 61 passengers on board: 30 for Glenwood; 12 for Grand Junction; 4 for Provo; 10 for Salt Lake; and 5 for Ogden and the Amtrak SFZ connection.

We burst from the west portal into a dazzling display of fall scenery. It's one scenic thrill after another. Fraser Canyon. Byers Canyon. And brooding, darkened Gore Canyon, again looking slightly unreal. Had DeMille been here too? We roll around the canyonside curves near Radium, and right on time into Bond, junction point with the Craig line. I look wistfully at the route of the old YAMPA VALLEY MAIL, which I had once ridden to Craig. Transport Justice may require it to run again some day.

Leaving Bond, I enter the dining car fro lunch. Again I am well served, altho the prices are inching upward, and in some cases are well above Amtrak levels. My steward tells me I am served the final fish filet, as they have run out of this popular dish. Rolling thru Red Canyon I have an opportunity to talk with the conductor. He tells me that the winds at the Big Ten are no joke, and everything I had heard about them is true. He mentions that his monthly pay for working 3 days per week is $1,246. "Boy, I never thought I'd have a job this good," he said. A full day's pay is a one-way trip from Denver to Grand Junction or vice versa--an indication why the RGZ loses a lot of money. A total of 49 paying passengers isn't contributing much toward that salary.

After leaving Red Canyon, on the right side of the train for a few miles are a number of voluminous hot springs. Steamy in winter, during a pleasant fall day they can be identified by the lush growths of thermophyllic algae. Some of these springs have been damned, forming ponds that remain ice-free the year around; a welcome refuge for waterfowl in the harsh Colorado mountain winter.

We reach Dotsero early. This is the junction with the Tennessee Pass



Another view of the RGZ at Glenwood Springs, by Paul Rayton, from a stereo Kodacolor original. In the left background is the Denver Hotel. "Silver Sky" is the rear observation on the train, which on this occasion had a freight unit on the point.

route, and a westbound freight is waiting for the RGZ to clear. "We're running pretty hot," said the conductor as we moved onto the ex-narrow gauge route built by Gen. William Jackson Palmer, another railroad "great" who turned his little line west into the Rockies at Pueblo after figuring that the original proposed destination of Mexico City wasn't going to be worth the effort.

Glenwood Canyon soon looms above us, and is scorched with fall foliage. It seems that every Aspen tree there is "doing its thing" in double-time or more.

Several minutes ahead of schedule, we pull into Grizzley siding, the point where the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYRS met if they were on time. Across the river, the monument to the dome car, erected when the CZ was inaugurated, still stands. Finally, a fast freight roars by, and moments later we are rolling west. Thru a tunnel, and then majestically, Glenwood Springs rolls into view.

Beautiful Glenwood. Spa in the mountains, luring visitors from thousands of miles to its colorful wonders.

I can hardly await our arrival only a few seconds away, joining the many others who have come to this vacation mountain paradise since the 1880s. Theodore Roosevelt soaked here. It's also where he gave his "America doesn't need timid good men" speech in Horace Mann's church--a lesson that could well be repeated in these Watergate corrupted times. Glenwood's Hotel Colorado had been Roosevelt's summer White House in the early 1900s.

The RGZ pulled in exactly on time, and I hurried to my inexpensive room in the Denver Hotel directly across the street from the twin-towered depot. Time to watch trains, rest in the hot pools, and ingest as much scenery as possible. A relaxed, unspoiled place.

And my arrival was on a relaxed, unspoiled train. My advice: as soon as possible, drop everything and ride the RGZ, one of the world's greatest travel treats. And if you have the time, stop in Glenwood, and enjoy its wonderful way of life, if even for a few days, before Col. Sanders inevitably marches upon it.

SUBSCRIBE TO THIS NEWSLETTER. Just six dollars a year for 24 twice-monthly issues delivered to you by first class mail. Send your remittance now or ask us to bill you. Write: Message Media, Dept. RTN, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709.

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN THE ROCKIES

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1973
THROUGH
TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1974

HERE'S THE LONG WEEKEND YOU'VE WAITED ALL YEAR FOR! JOIN THE BAY AREA ELECTRIC RAILROAD ASSOCIATION FOR A LONG WEEKEND RAIL SAFARI TO DENVER FEATURING BOTH THE SAN FRANCISCO AND RIO GRANDE ZEPHYRS.

ITINERARY

LV	OAKLAND	ATK #6	9.20 AM	SAT	DEC 29
AR	DENVER	ATK #6	4.00 PM	SUN	DEC 30
	OVERNIGHT AT THE BROWN PALACE HOTEL				
	MOTOR COACH TRANSFER TO & FROM STATION				
LV	DENVER	DRG #17	7.30 AM	MON	DEC 31
AR	SALT LAKE CITY	DRG #17	9.30 PM	MON	DEC 31
	MOTOR COACH TRANSFER TO OGDEN				
LV	OGDEN	ATK #5	10.45 PM	MON	DEC 31
	NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION IN LOUNGE CAR				
AR	OAKLAND	ATK #5	3.05 PM	TUE	JAN 1

ROOMETTE AND BEDROOM ACCOMMODATIONS PER PERSON

ROOMETTE	$250.00
BEDROOM FOR ONE	$370.00
BEDROOM FOR TWO	$250.00
BEDROOM SUITE FOR TWO	$370.00
BEDROOM SUITE FOR THREE	$275.00
BEDROOM SUITE FOR FOUR	$250.00

SINGLE HOTEL ROOM SUPPLEMENT $5.00

A FIFTY DOLLAR PER PERSON DEPOSIT HOLDS SPACE UNTIL DECEMBER 26, WHEN FINAL PAYMENT IS DUE.

BAY AREA ELECTRIC RAILROAD ASSOCIATION, INC.
3141 FRANKLIN STREET, APARTMENT 11
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94123
TELEPHONE (415) 673-6547

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"With our oil resources becomingly increasingly precious, not just this winter but for some years ahead, the energy efficiency of rail travel is an especially compelling argument for expansion of appropriate federal assistance to Amtrak. (This aid assures Amtrak) of continuity and flexibility in its operations at this important time in rail passenger development and in our national energy squeeze."

--President Richard Nixon in signing the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973, November 3

"Both a cruise liner and a train are travel modes for those who wish to get away from it all--who want an unhurried sense of relaxation, of enjoyment of the trip for the trip's sake."

--Harold Graham of Amtrak in press release announcing expansion of the Rail/Sail Program, Nov. 9

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"New York-Philadelphia trains have been spaced out to provide departures each half hour all day."

--Amtrak press release, October 29

(The spaced-out train--a groovy new trip for the young people?)

Urban-Suburban Transit

NEW YORK VOTERS, as expected, failed to pass Governor Rockefeller's $3.5 billion transportation bond issue Nov. 6. Failure of the issue imperils capital improvements to some rapid transit systems as well as the state's interstate highways, and it kills a plan of permanent state subsidies for transit fares. New York 's subway fare could jump from 35¢ to as high as 60¢...

BART HAS THE legal ability to acquire by eminent domain an easement for use of the railroad tracks of a private corporation which are appropriated to public use--this is the opinion of California legislative counsel. Thus if BART were introduced to San Mateo County, it could acquire an easement on the SP right of way, with the Public Utilities Commission fixing the compensation to be paid the SP...

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA is planning a personal-transportation system (people mover) and has selected Rohr Industries of Chula Vista, Calif. to build the $100 million system. Rohr's system uses 6-passenger cabs hung from overhead guideways, propelled under computerized control...

CANADIAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT proclaimed on Oct. 22 the establishment of a new national transportation agency to assist in developing urban transit systems...

RETURN OF STREETCARS: more and more cities are calling for the streetcars (trolleys, trams) to come back. Edinburgh, Scotland is one of the latest. It wants an LRT (light rapid transport) system to replace the one scrapped in 1956...

THE MONORAIL SYSTEM connecting El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico, across the Rio Grande River, will be constructed beginning in February as a joint venture by a U.S.-Mexican business group. It may cost up to $30 million...

WHEN FARE INCREASES went into effect on Southern Pacific's commute line out of San Francisco Nov. 1, protesting commuters came with brooms to wash dirty windows and tell the press about deteriorating service...

WHILE THE FEDERAL government is pushing states to cut down auto usage because of energy and pollution problems, Gov. Reagan and Lt. Gov. Reinecke are continuing to back freeway interests. Reagan said he is proud of the freeways, and Reinecke commented that "Freeway building being the long-term proposition that it is, I think it would be wrong to shut off the cement trucks at this point"...

BART IN SAN FRANCISCO

Trains of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District began revenue operations in San Francisco as scheduled on Monday, November 5. The Saturday before an open house was held on the Montgomery Street, San Francisco, to Daly City line with celebrations and free roundtrip rides between adjoining stations.

The open house day was clear and bright, and large crowds were out for their BART sampler. Monday morning, it happened, saw a heavy, wet storm striking the Bay Area,

and the weather was mostly responsible for one of the worst auto traffic tieups in the history of the area. But BART patrons found they could go about under Market Steet without exposure to the elements. Most of the 7.5 mile line is underground. The Daly City terminus, actually in San Mateo County, a non-BART joining county, is elevated. And riders found that they could be whisked between Daly City and Montgomery Street, heart of San Francisco's financial district, in just 13 minutes.

Patronage was heavy the opening day, and has remained so. Ridership is already about the same as on the Eastbay lines--about 35,000 daily. The Daly City line is presently isolated from the two Eastbay lines, since the trans-Bay tube is not being used yet because of unsolved train detection problems where lines join at the east end of the trans-Bay segment. Trains do deadhead thru the tube, however, in moving them between lines or yards. The Westbay segment, as with the Eastbay, is presently operating from about 6am to 8pm on weekdays only. BART says these hours will be augmented when the holiday shopping season commences.

Things went smoothly for opening day, and we've heard no real complaints about service on the new line. However, it was found that BART's free Daly City parking lot fills up regularly by 7am, and is inadequate. Complaints are beginning to emerge in the Eastbay that BART has moved its most reliable equipment into San Francisco, leaving the rest of the disconnected system with a shortage of cars and fewer trains, and mainly the more problem-ridden ones at that. Shortly before this writing there was, for example, a 1-hour tieup on the Richmond-Fremont line because of equipment breakdowns.

The Redwood City Tribune analyzed transportation times and expenses between that Peninsula city and San Francisco and concluded: the fastest method is to drive int-

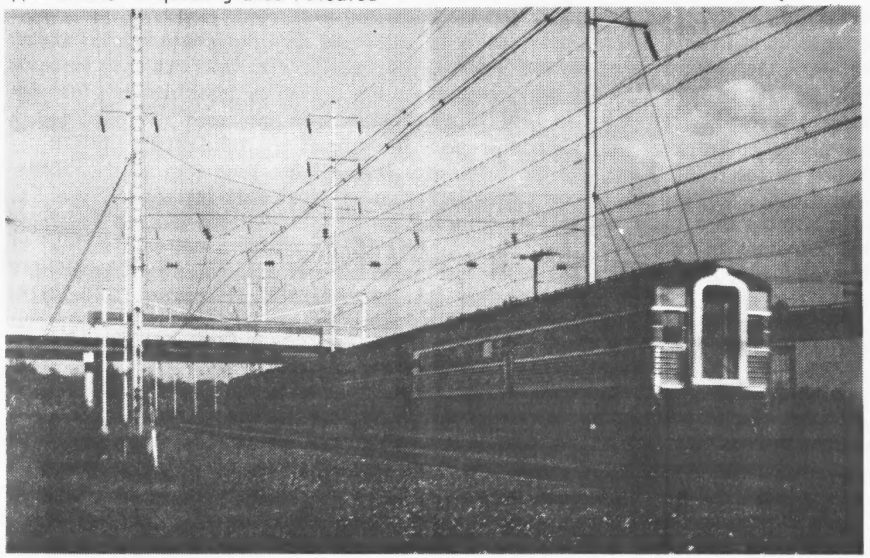
 (continued on page 18)

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR OBSERVATIONS - Ken Maylath

Amtrak has been touting improved equipment on certain Northeast Corridor trains, as outlined last issue, and has considered the MERCHANTS LIMITED the number one conventional train in the corridor. So a few days ago I decided to check out the MERCHANTS with an eye to performance compared with promise.

A good-sized crowd was boarding on a Sunday afternoon at Washington as the revised departure time of 4:05pm approached. A quick glance revealed that the equipment was indeed not what corridor passengers have expected in recent years. Of nine cars, only two were not refurbished and they probably wouldn't have been in the consist at all except for the weekend travel peak. Even one of the unrefurbished coaches was not all that ordinary: it was a low density proposition purchased by the Penn Central several years ago from the Union Pacific for use on the BROADWAY, and repainted PC green outside. It had been fixed up a bit inside too, with carpeting on the floor and recovered seats.

Moving forward, 3 refurbished coaches--a couple of them obviously ex-Seaboard equipment. The third in particular deserves comment: it was the latest wrinkle in coach refurbishing by Amtrak, complete with darkly tinted window glass, airline style seats, and a false ceiling with indirect lighting behind. By any standard, and especially Northeast Corridor standards, a striking and impressive car. Moving forward again, the diner-lounge and two more refurbished coaches, one obviously ex-UP.



First all-refurbished Eastern train was the BROADWAY LIMITED. In this photo by Ken Maylath a 4-car BROADWAY connection to Washington was being whisked thru Middle River, Maryland last May by a GG-1 electric engine. Refurbished square-end rear observations have become almost the trademark of the train.

Let it not be said that passengers don't pay attention to refurbished equipment. While the two non-refurbished cars were closest to the bumper post at Union Station, they were virtually empty. The 3 refurbished pieces of equipment ahead of them were virtually full out of Washington.

Yes, it seems that Amtrak speaks the truth when it says that key conventional trains in the corridor are getting better equipment. Long-time riders in the typical Pennsylvania and PC coaches around here have to welcome the change.

(continued from page 16)

erstate 280 to Daly City and take BART. Next fastest ones, in descending order: driving all the way via 280; taking SP commute trains; taking Greyhound; driving the Bayshore Freeway. In cost, the cheapest is SP, everything considered. Then come Greyhound, driving 280 plus BART, driving Bayshore, and driving 280 only.

mixed train of thoughts

THE STOCK MARKET fell sharply upon news of federal plans for fuel conservation, but you probably noticed also that Auto-Train Corporation's stock began climbing again... NOVEMBER 12 WAS the date the national arbitration panel decided upon for Amtrak and SP to have plans worked out for track repairs to reroute the TEXAS CHIEF through Dallas..... THERE'S ONE DANGER in the Congressionally-approved revamping of Amtrak's Board of Directors to make it politically balanced and more representative of the consumer: that is that some members would like to see Charles Luna removed, which would be most unfortunate, say many, because he has proven an important catalyst to Amtrak's progress..... NEW YORK CENTRAL observation cars have been purchased and refurbished by Amtrak. The "Wingate Brook," formerly of the 20th CENTURY LIMITED, is running on the TEXAS CHIEF, and the "Air Force Academy" has been seen on the PANAMA LIMITED..... AMTRAK LOST ITScourt case in Kansas--it must obey the state liquor laws while running thru there and sell no drinks..... SOUTHERN RAILWAY HAS applied for fare increases to take effect Nov. 15..... MILLIONAIRE NORTON SIMON sold much of his stock in Burlington Northern and publicly blasted the railroad industry this month saying they should run trains rather than get into diversification..... AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION is said to be exploring possible routes between Chicago and Denver..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION has finished a study that attacks railroads, as Norton Simon did, for stripping assets from their transportation subsidiaries, in the case of railroad holding companies. Some findings point to thousands of acres of land being given to the SP and UP holding companies "at no cost to the parent"..... ONE OF AMTRAK'S tardiest timetables has been the nationwide table effective Oct. 28. As of that date, Northeastern riders had to content themselves with a revised Boston-Washington folder showing only that route but not listing trains running just between Philadelphia and N.Y. Ken Maylath reports that 10 days after the new changes there were still no Northeast regional or nationwide schedules available in the East. Some agents were handing out Agent's Edition copies to passengers..... TWENTIETH CENTURY RAILROAD Club people rode the first run of the Turboliners and interviewed Harold Graham in their publication, The Fast Mail (Nov.). They thought the turbos were great. But they would be nicer yet with club cars and a bit more elegant food service..... AFTER SAN FRANCISCO got tied up in a huge traffic jam the day BART began running (BART was unaffected by the downpour), popular columnist Herb Caen quipped: "You could also reflect that as we confront The Last Crisis, the Fiendly (sic) Southern Pacific is contemplating cutting its Peninsula commute service because it's losing money. Money? Who cares about money when we are strangling on our own fading affluence?"..... AMTRAK MADE A test run of the Chicago-Dubuque train Nov. 6 westbound & Nov. 7 east. Used 2 RDC cars, Nos. 31 & 32. Crews found the cars nicely refurbished and overhauled, reports Scott Rogers..... FIRST WESTBOUND RUN of the VALLEY FORGE late last month arrived 10 min late at a cold & rainy Princeton Jct., reports Henry Posner. Train consisted of a GG-1, 4 PC coaches, Amtrak diner 8091 used as a bar-lounge, and 4 more PC coaches..... INTERNATIONAL UNION of RAILWAYS has approved a plan to develop a high-speed rail network across Western Europe connecting major cities from Glasgow to Istanbul, with trains to cruise at 100mph. We could use one here.....

canadian news letter

CANADA'S MINISTER OF Urban Affairs, answering an inquiry by an RTN reader, says that he knows of no plan to relocate CN's Vancouver, B.C. depot to Port Mann. The Minister, who sits from a Vancouver riding, said that proposed track elimination projects in other Canadian cities, such as that suggested for Winnipeg, must be considered on their merits. Basford also indicated that restoration of CP Rail DOMINION trains and CN PANORAMA trains during summer and winter peak travel periods is being studied...

THE DOME OBSERVATION is missing from current consists of CP Rail's CANADIAN, which is now at winter consist. The Toronto section is now usually five cars. On Canadian National, the Scenerama dome cars on the SUPER CONTINENTAL are now in the shops for "extensive maintenance and refurbishing" and are to be returned to their consists early next year. CN passes out little blue notices to passengers informing them of the absence of this car that usually runs thru the Rockies...

CANADIAN NATIONAL IS said to be persisting in its trials of the TurboTrain, while Amtrak has apparently given up on the United Aircraft trains as a viable means of fast future transportation. The second Turbo to be acquired by Amtrak from Canada (the first one was destroyed in an accident) will evidently live out its days in Northeast Corridor service. The two Turbos were originally to be used in the Midwest in conjunction with the French-built Turboliners...

ADDITIONAL ELECTRIFICATION PROPOSALS are being studied by CP Rail because of rising fuel oil costs. Lines being studied for wires include Montreal-Toronto-Windsor and Winnipeg-Thunder Bay, in addition to previously announced B.C.-Alberta wire studies in the Rockies...

PREMIER WILLIAM DAVIS of Ontario was named Transit Man of the Year at the American Transit Association's annual meeting in Miami. Davis has been praised for halting expressway construction, funding transit, and pushing for development of new modes, buses and streetcars...

TORONTO'S TTC ANNOUNCED the conversion of its heavy Bay Street bus line from diesels to electric trolley coach. The job will take about 18 months and will utilize electric coaches idled when the Yonge subway extension was opened...

THE OPENING OF the Yonge subway extension to its permanent terminal at Finch has been set for March 31, 1974. This will add two more stations to the route...

A SCHEDULE HAS been set for the opening of another Amtrak route to Canada--the Chicago to Port Huron, Michigan route, which should start running over Grand Trunk tracks next March 1. It was the most heavily patronized route in Michigan before discontinuance with the Amtrak takeover. The state will pay 2/3 of operating deficits, estimated to be about $550,000 annually, according to Kevin McKinney, state project manager of intercity rail transportation and founder of Passenger Train Journal. Proposed schedule: lv Port Huron 6am, ar Chicago 11:30am; lv Chicago 4pm, ar Port Huron 11:30pm. Consist will initially be one coach and a snack car...

NEBRASKA ZEPHYR FOR SALE. The 5-car NEBRASKA ZEPHYR, mentioned in Glenn Lee's article on the RGZ in this issue, is for sale for $80,000 by its owner of three years, Dick McKinley. SCL locomotive 501 accompanies the consist, which includes coaches, generator car, a diner and a lounge. McKinley says the railroads refuse him permission to operate the train on their lines. He earlier owned the old DENVER ZEPHYR consist before selling it to a Kansas City banker.